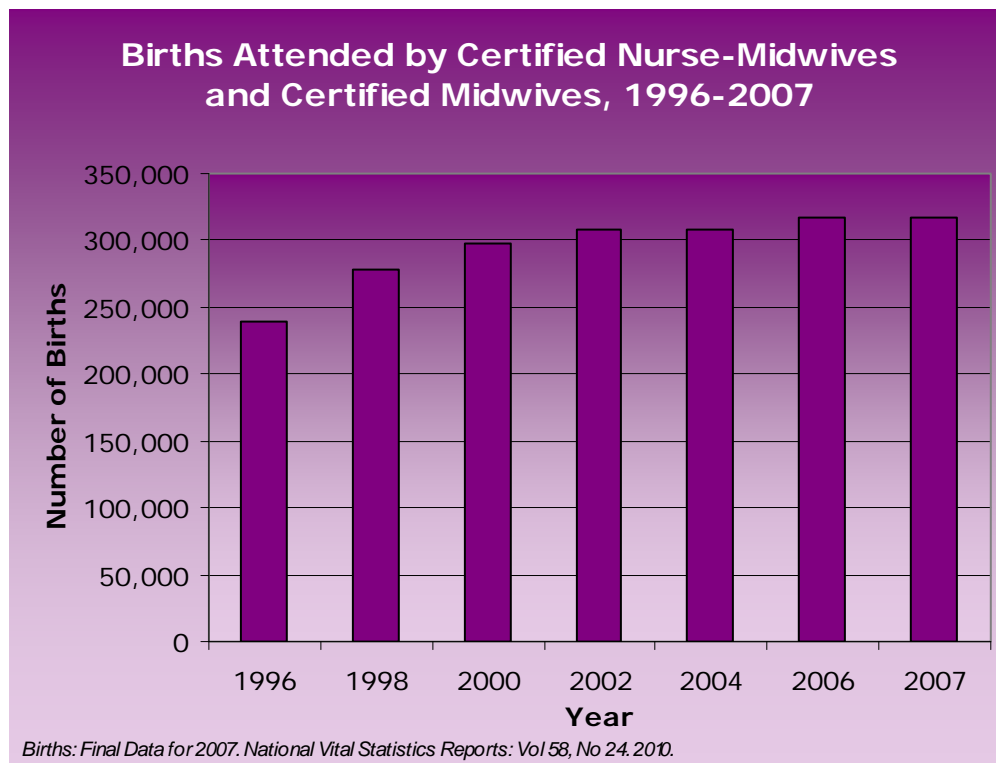


## Essential Facts about Midwives

### Midwives & Birth in the US

- American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional organization representing certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs).
- According to the American Midwifery Certification Board, there are 11,546 CNMs/CMs. (1) The vast majority of midwives in the US are CNMs/CMs.
- In 2007, the most recent year for which final birth data statistics are available from the National Center for Health Statistics, the number of CNM/CM-attended births remained steady following a record high in 2006. CNMs/CMs attended 316,811 births in 2007. This represents 93% of all midwife-attended births, 10.8% of all vaginal births, and 7.3% of all births. (2)
- CNM/CM-attended births reflect the diversity of the US population. In 2007, CNM/CM-attended hospital births were most frequent among American Indian/Alaska Native women (17.2%), followed by Hispanic women (8.0%), non-Hispanic Black women (6.8%), non-Hispanic white women (6.8%), and Asian or Pacific Islander women (5.8%). (2)



### Midwifery Practice

- CNMs are licensed, independent health care providers with prescriptive authority in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In fact, CNMs are defined as primary care providers under federal law.
  - Because CM is a newer, equivalent, pathway to midwifery, it is not yet reflected in all state legislatures. CMs can practice in New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island (5)
- While midwives are well-known for attending births, in 2008, 53.3% of CNMs/CMs identified reproductive care and 33.1% identified primary care as main responsibilities in their full-time positions. Examples include annual exams, basic nutrition, parenting education, patient education, and reproductive health visits. (6)
- CNMs have prescription-writing authority in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, and Guam. CMs have prescription-writing authority in New York. (5)
- In 2007, 96.5% of CNM/CM-attended births occurred in hospitals, 2% occurred in freestanding birth centers, and 1.4% occurred in homes. (1) More than 50% of CNMs/CMs list physician practices or hospitals/medical centers as their principal employers. (7)
- Medicaid reimbursement for CNM/CM care is mandatory in all states, and as of January 1, 2011, is 100% of the physician fee schedule under the Medicare part B fee schedule. (5) Thirty-three states—roughly two thirds of the nation—also mandate private insurance reimbursement for midwifery services.

### Midwifery Education

- Standards for education and certification in midwifery are identical for CNMs and CMs. (2) The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) is the official accrediting body of ACNM. There are 39 ACME-accredited midwifery education programs in the US and Puerto Rico. (3)
- Approximately 82.3% of CNMs have a master's degree, and 7.5% hold a doctoral degree. (6)
- In 2009, 1,102 students were enrolled in ACME-accredited midwifery education programs. (3)

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(1) American Midwifery Certification Board

(2) Martin JA, Hamilton BE, Sutton PD, Ventura SJ, Menacker F, Kirmeyer S, Matthews TJ, Kirmeyer S, Osterman MJK. Births: Final data for 2007. National vital statistics reports; vol 58 no 24. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2010.

(3) ACNM Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education

(4) ACNM Compensation and Benefits Survey 2007

(5) "A Handbook of State Legislation," ACNM, 2002

(6) Fullerton J, Schuiling K, Sipe TA. Findings From the Analysis of the American College of Nurse-Midwives' Membership Surveys: 2006–2008. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health* 2010; 55: 299-307.

\*Updated August 2010